

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, October 27, 2010

5:00 PM

Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Building

DRAFT Minutes

Present: Chair: Steve Rogers, Roger Adams, Brien Buckman, Curt Hirsch, Marty Hirschorn,
Rene Schein, Brian Wells

1. Call to Order

Steve Rogers called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

2. Public Comment

There was no public present.

3. Approval of September 29, 2010 minutes

Rene Schein made a motion to approve the September 29, 2010 minutes. Roger Adams seconded the motion. Brien Buckman noted that his first name had been misspelled in the list of attendees. The minutes were approved with an abstention by Mr. Buckman.

4. Update on Town Economic and Community Development Efforts

Cynthia van Zelm said since her update to the Committee in September 2009, a small staff group of herself, Town Manager Matt Hart, Town Planning Director Greg Padick, and Partnership Special Projects Coordinator Kathleen Paterson have been meeting monthly and working on some economic and community development initiatives town-wide. She said a dialogue has begun with UConn's Technology Incubation Program. Ms. van Zelm said that she and Mr. Hart had begun a business visitation program and have met with NERAC and with one of the commercial property owners in town. Ms. Paterson is working on a business visitation packet. An economic and community development webpage has been added to the Town's website (www.mansfieldct.org). A Mansfield marketing kit developed by the Windham Region Council of Governments has also been placed on the webpage. Ms. van Zelm said one of the Town Manager's office interns is working on a database of available vacant commercial and industrial land in town.

Mr. Rogers said he thought the Committee's mission is complimentary to the staff work.

5. Continued Review of Committee Charge

The Committee continued to review the Committee's revised charge. Mr. Buckman suggested expanding on what it means to strengthen existing businesses (bullet #1). Ms. Schein suggested adding language about communicating with current businesses on a regular basis as a way of assisting/strengthening businesses.

The Committee discussed how far its scope should go, especially with respect to a business inventory. Should it focus just on Storrs Center businesses or all businesses in Mansfield? Mr. Rogers thought it made sense to focus on the overall community to the extent that is possible.

Mr. Rogers said he thought there might eventually be a merchants association for the Storrs Center businesses. Would the Committee serve that role or another entity?

Mr. Adams said the Chamber of Commerce could send information about its educational programs to a Partnership business inventory list.

The Committee discussed what assistance it might provide to businesses that will be affected by relocation. Mr. Rogers said it would be helpful to know if any businesses have concerns. The Committee asked Ms. van Zelm to provide information on all the businesses affected by relocation and what current businesses had signed Letters of Intent to be part of the new project.

Mr. Rogers said it would be helpful for the Committee to be a sounding board once Storrs Center is up and running with respect to issues that may affect businesses. Ms. van Zelm also noted that it will be important for access to businesses to be clear once construction starts.

Marty Hirschorn expressed interest in the Committee's involvement in providing input to the master developer on what type of businesses the community would like to see in Storrs Center.

Ms. van Zelm said she will talk to Howard Kaufman at LeylandAlliance about speaking to the Committee about commercial leasing.

Ms. van Zelm will also check with Leyland about whether they still have information from the surveys that former retail consultant Live Work Learn Play conducted a few years ago in Mansfield about shopper preferences.

Mr. Rogers said he hopes that the Committee charge can be finalized at the next meeting and recommended to the Board for final approval.

Mr. Rogers asked Committee members to e-mail him any changes with respect to the Committee charge.

6. Future meetings

The Committee agreed to meet on November 17 at 5 pm in the Town Hall as the Partnership had a meeting already scheduled for 5 pm on the 17th. Mr. Hirsch will secure a conference room.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.